



The Conference Countdown!

By Melissa Beard, Conference Committee Chair

May 8 is approaching quickly but it is not too late to register for the 2006 ICSEW Professional Leadership Conference, "Today's Women, Today's Leaders."

The committee has been hard at work ensuring that the conference will be a valuable experience with plenty of information you can share with your office.

In addition to hearing Sunny Kobe Cook's inspiring personal journey from secretary to CEO, you will hear Dr. Cathy Fromme speak about trust and how that can strengthen an organization.

Then, Helen Thayer and Eva Santos will inspire you with their stories of

perseverance against the odds.

Between these powerful speakers are 36 workshops focused on Communication, Health and Wellness, and Professional Development. Topics include, Change: Ain't it Gr8?, Mentoring: Just Do It!, Overcoming Your Barriers and Getting Ahead, Joy is a Choice!, and Communicating Across the Generations.

Details about the conference and specific workshops can be found at <http://icsew.wa.gov/conferences/default.htm>.

The registration fee is \$290 and includes all meals while at the conference. There is no limit on the number of participants an agency can send.

We hope to see you in Kennewick in May!

New Logo to be Unveiled at Conference

By Lonnie Peterson, Communications Committee Chair

Earlier this year, the ICSEW conducted a logo redesign contest that was open to all state employees and their families. Thirteen logos were submitted and 1048 votes were tallied.

The top three designs were looked over by a panel of graphic designers, Ben Dietz (Department of Transportation), and Health and Wellness Committee Chair Jan Olmstead (Health Care Authority).

Their recommendations were forwarded to the ICSEW Executive Board for a final vote and, the winner will be announced, and the logo will be officially unveiled at the ICSEW Conference on May 8 in Kennewick, Washington.

Thank you to all of the contestants

and to everyone who voted. Thank you also to Sarah Bland (State Board of Education) and Linda Watson (Department of Retirement Systems), ICSEW Web Developers, who made the voting process a breeze. A special thank you goes to Connie Nabors, Ben Dietz, Roxanne Lowe, Jan Olmstead, and everyone else who helped this process along.

Update From the Chair



By Dianna Gifford, ICSEW Chair

On February 1, 2006, Governor Christine Gregoire, at the recommendation of the ICSEW, issued the committee a new executive order. This executive order (#06-01) re-emphasizes the need for the ICSEW and lifts some of the restrictions to allow a broader membership base.

The old executive order (#89-09) limited participation from agencies that have less than 25 women. Lifting that limit will allow greater ICSEW representation and diversity of women.

Women in state government have unique and special issues regarding working conditions and accessing employment in leadership roles. The new executive order will allow the ICSEW to continue to identify the evolving needs of state employed women.

The ICSEW advises the gubernatorial staff regarding education, training, career development, and other conditions of employment. The ICSEW advises state agencies on the development and implementation of comprehensive and coordinated policies, plans, and programs focusing on the special issues and needs of women in state

government.

The new executive order also emphasizes the support of state departments or agencies to provide appropriate and reasonable resources to the committee, such as the designation of at least one representative to the committee; granting that representative reasonable accommodations to attend committee meetings and events; and providing, as necessary and available, office supplies, distribution capabilities, and meeting facilities for committee work.

In other news, please join me in welcoming Robyn Bradshaw of The Evergreen State College as the new ICSEW Historian. Robyn has some great ideas for the ICSEW. Stay tuned—you will be hearing more from her!

On March 2, 2006, the ICSEW Executive Board met for a half day teambuilding retreat. The intent of this retreat was to develop teambuilding exercises for the ICSEW membership, but the conclusion produced so much more.

The meeting generated several goals that are already coming to fruition. Of most importance is the decision to emphasize to the general membership that the ICSEW is a group that develops leadership potential in all women, no matter their job title or their place of employment.

The ICSEW Executive Board is also working on a new ICSEW mission and bylaws. Stay tuned for more information!

ICSEW Event Information

May 8-10, 2006 - ICSEW Biennial Conference. Conference held at the Three Rivers Convention Center in Kennewick, Washington. See the ICSEW Web site at <http://icsew.wa.gov> for more information and updates.

May 18, 2006 - Take Our Daughters and Sons to Work Day statewide event. Event held in the Capitol Rotunda. See the ICSEW Web site at <http://icsew.wa.gov> for more information.

May 19, 2006 - "Get Organized, How to Manage Paper, People, Space, and Time" by Ms. Kathy Bote. Training class held at the Lacey Fire Hall--Station 34 in Lacey, WA.

May 25, 2006 - "How to be a Powerful Communicator and Conquer Stress for Success" by Ms. Sandra Smith. Training class held at the Lacey Fire Hall--Station 34 in Lacey, WA.



Governor Christine Gregoire With Interagency Committee of State Employed Women (ICSEW), State Capitol, March 14, 2006

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2006 TODSTWD Statewide Event

By Misty Krug, TODSTWD Committee Chair

The national date for the Take Our Daughters And Sons To Work Day (TODSTWD) event is on the fourth Thursday in April, which this year is April 27, 2006.

Due to conflicts with WASL testing, Washington State will observe TODSTWD on **May 18, 2006**. This day is designed to create a unique educational experience for girls and boys across America.

Governor Christine Gregoire supports this event and encourages state agencies to participate by allowing their employees to bring their children to work.

One purpose of this important day is that it strengthens the connection between education and work, and relationships between parents and their children. It allows children to gain a perspective about life and careers through their parents in the workplace and provides them with an opportunity to begin envisioning their future career and family goals.

The ICSEW is hosting TODSTWD this year in the Capitol Building. The

event will begin at 8:15 a.m. with a welcome address in the Capitol Rotunda, and will include a keynote speech at 8:30 a.m. by Supreme Court Justice Bobbe J. Bridge.

The day will continue until 3:00 p.m. with passport stamping throughout the Legislative Building. Employees choosing to participate in any events on the Capitol Campus must check with their management regarding the use of leave.

For more information on this year's event, please contact Misty Krug at 509-737-2857 or rmis300@dshs.wa.gov.

You can also find more information on the ICSEW Web site, www.icsew.wa.gov.

How to Survive Rising Costs at the Pump

By Kelly Stowe

As I paid \$3.00 a gallon for gas on my way to work the other morning, I felt a little faint. I drive by a gas station that burnt down a couple of years ago where they still haven't taken down the old sign with how much gas was before the station burnt to the ground...\$1.69. How sad is it that \$1.69 a gallon now seems like a bargain (even though I know I griped then about how much gas was).

Here are some tips to help you fill up less as gas prices rise:

*Drive efficiently. I know that seems like a given but did you know that for every 5 mph over 60 mph it is equivalent to spending an additional \$0.20 per gallon for gas?

*Don't be aggressive. Speeding, hitting the gas rapidly or slamming on your brakes all lower gas mileage.

*Get rid of Excess Baggage. Vehicle weight comes into play with gas mileage. I didn't really think about it, but at www.fueleconomy.gov, it says that an extra 100 pounds in your vehicle can reduce your gas mileage by up to 2 per cent.

After reading this, I finally took the bags and boxes of old clothes that had been sitting in the back of my van for a month to the Goodwill and did notice that my gas mileage seemed to increase. I am going to take this a bit further and start going to the gym and walking. If I finally lose the 25 pounds I've put on since my baby was born (she's 6) I will not only improve my health, but save at the pump!

Other tips: Get a tune up. Tuning up a car can help improve gas mileage. You should also be checking and replacing air filters regularly. Make sure your tires are properly inflated. Under inflated tires are not only dangerous, but decrease your gas mileage. Use the right weight of oil. It is important that you use the grade of oil that your car manufacturer recommends. This can improve your gas mileage by 1-2 percent.

Of course the most common sense way to save on gas is to keep your car at home. Take public transit, carpool, or telecommute if at all possible. If those options don't work for you, try to start and end your work day during "off-peak" hours.

Women Now!

By Robyn Bradshaw, ICSEW Historian

On April 5, 2006, the ICSEW co-sponsored the Women Now! Balancing Personal Community, and Work Life symposium. The keynote speaker, Stephanie Coontz, is a nationally-known history and family studies professor at The Evergreen State College and is currently the director of Research and Public Education for the Council on Contemporary Families.

Stephanie kicked off the event with her very powerful speech titled, "Half the Workforce Doesn't Have a Wife: Getting Real about Work and Family Balance."

She presented hard data on the realities of women, marriage, and children that encouraged others, like myself, to seek change. She shared that families throughout history have had two working adults living within hardworking communities in which the communities supported each other through tough times.

She spoke about the realities of women and the workforce. Stay-at-home mothers have a higher chance of feeling isolated and depressed; where as employed mothers are more likely

to be more time stressed. The clash between new realities and old values has hit women especially hard.

Stephanie referred to President Theodore Roosevelt's State of the Union Address given on April 5, 1907 where he called attention to the appalling working conditions in American business. Because of President Roosevelt, many policies were enacted to protect the health and safety of workers and consumers.

Stephanie made an appeal for all of us to become advocates like President Theodore Roosevelt. What was done for men at the turn of the century should be done now to make safe families. Push for policies to protect the fragility of marriage, child education, and social capital in the workplace.

I recommend reading Stephanie's books, The Way We Never Were: American Families and the Nostalgia Trap and Marriage, a History: from Obedience to Intimacy or How Love Conquered Marriage. I also recommend reading President Theodore Roosevelt's 1907 State of the Union Address.



Agency in the Spotlight Washington State Board of Education

By Sarah Jane Bland, ICSEW Web Developer

The Washington State Board of Education (SBE) consists of a staff of five, and is one of the longest existing institutions in state government. It has operated continuously since 1877, when it was created by the Washington Territorial Legislature.

The SBE was reconstituted in January 2006, with the passage of Senate Bill 5732 during the 2005 legislative session.

This legislation transferred teacher prep and certification to the Professional Educator Standards Board, and moved in duties from the now dissolved Academic, Achievement, and Accountability Commission (A+).

Engrossed Substitute House Bill 3098 passed in 2006, further realigning SBE duties, shifting many to the Superintendent of Public Instruction.

Now, the SBE's primary charge and focus are accountability, basic education assistance compliance and waivers, high school graduation requirements, private school approval and accreditation, and homeschool testing. The SBE also serves the public by channeling calls and concerns from citizens to the proper agencies and departments.

The SBE's 16-member composition is now one-of-a-kind. Five members are elected by public school boards of directors, one member is elected by state-approved private schools, the Superintendent of Public Instruction is elected statewide, seven members are appointed by the Governor, and two student representatives (one high school junior and one senior) chosen by the WA Assoc. of Student Councils.

For more information on the SBE please visit www.sbe.wa.gov.

Self Defense Course Proves Invaluable

By Traci Kessel

In September 2005, I received a training notice from the ICSEW regarding a beginning/intermediate self-defense class.

A group of women from my section thought it would be a fun team building activity to attend together, so we signed up. We donned our sweats and sneakers and readied ourselves for a lot of shouting and good fun.

What we got was way beyond any of our expectations. Clan Jacobs entered the room and immediately had our attention with his presence, not to mention his skill and the way he continually demonstrated on his assistants, who inevitably ended up on the floor. We were able to practice on them (with pads, of course!) and work on technique with each other.

This was such a valuable course that I opted to take it a second time in March. Again, I came away with such an awareness of myself and my surroundings. I continued to sing Clan's praises throughout my own agency and be presented them at our Support Staff Conference in April.

In early March, I was approached at 1:00 in the afternoon by a person who shoved me and demanded my purse. Thanks to this initial training and the refresher, I had several scenarios' play-

ing out in my head before the individual even got to me.

This class, undoubtedly, gave me the upper hand and the confidence to get out of a situation that may have turned out much differently had I not had the mindset given to me by Clan and his trainers.

I would encourage ANYONE to take this class, then TAKE IT AGAIN. It was absolutely invaluable and I look forward to taking it yet, again. Thank you, Clan!

Self Defense Tips:

1. Be Aware. Always be aware of your surroundings.
2. Don't be distracted by talking on your cell phone, rummaging through your purse, etc., when getting in and out of your vehicle.
3. Always park in a well-lit lot.
4. Use your instinct. If you sense a problem is on its way, change your route, cross the street...prepare to run or defend yourself.
5. Never act or look like an easy target. Many aggressors will back down if you maintain eye contact and are not intimidated by them.



Join the WOMAN Challenge--an 8-week challenge to increase your physical activity beginning Mother's Day Sunday, May 14, to kick off National Women's Health Week. The challenge is sponsored by the Office on Women's Health, U.S. Department of Health and Human Services.

Sign up now!

It's quick and easy! Just go to: womenshealth.gov/whw/woman. Join thousands of other women and girls (aged 9 and older) who are making a commitment to their health by participating in the WOMAN Challenge.

For participants with disabilities armband pedometers (while supplies last) are being offered as well as other resources. Register now and receive a free pedometer and a tracking log to record your physical activity (while supplies last).

Choose one of six virtual routes across the United States to track your progress during the Challenge--explore the country without leaving your hometown! Participate as an individual or form a team of two to ten people and select a physical activity goal that fits your lifestyle.

Receive motivational e-mails, useful health information, and regular progress reports when you record your activity on the interactive Web site. To register and for more information go to: <http://www.womenshealth.gov/whw/woman>.

Don't Forget to Stay Hydrated

By Julie Sjoholm

We've had it drilled into our heads about the importance of us drinking eight glasses of water a day. There have been some recent challenges to this old rule by health care professionals saying that some individuals may require more than the standard eight glasses a day and some may require less.

Regardless of what "side" of the controversy you are on, I would like to remind you of the importance of drinking water.

As an average adult, every day you lose more than ten cups of water simply by sweating, breathing, and eliminating waste. You also lose minerals such as sodium, potassium, and calcium that maintain the balance of fluids in your body.

All of this happens before you even think about mowing your lawn or climbing on your treadmill. Because water makes up 60 percent of our body weight, it is imperative to remain hydrated.

Your body needs water to digest and absorb vitamins and nutrients. It also detoxifies the liver and kidneys. It aids in digestion and absorption of food, regulates body temperature and blood circulation, and carries nutrients and oxygen to cells.

Water also cushions joints and protects tissues and organs, including the spinal cord, from shock and damage. Water has been ranked by experts as second only to oxygen as essential for life. People can generally live up to 1

month without food, but only 1 week without water.

Often, we don't feel thirst even when our bodies need fluid. Some nutritionists insist that 80 percent of the country is walking around dehydrated. Water has also been called the "wonder drug."

Aside from excessive thirst, here are some other common signs of dehydration: sleepiness/tiredness, dry mouth, muscle weakness, headache, dizziness/lightheadedness, lack of sweating, sunken eyes, shriveled/dry skin that lacks elasticity and doesn't bounce back when pinched, rapid heart beat, and water retention.

Drinking enough water may also help you improve your energy, increase your mental and physical performance, help prevent kidney stones, aids in weight loss, aids in giving you energy for exercise, and reduces your risk for bladder, kidney and urinary tract infections.

We often confuse hunger for thirst. Next time you feel hungry, try drinking a glass of water instead. Or, try filling your plate with foods that contain a lot of water. The high water volume of these foods appear larger and provide a visual stimulation tricking you to think you're eating more than you really are.

Try jazzing up your water by adding a slice of lemon or orange or a sprig of mint. You can also try adding a splash of fruit juice or using "juice cubes."

What am I Putting on My Face?

By Patricia Jatzczak

Consumer Myth: If a product is on the shelf, it is safe

Many consumers assume that if a product is on the shelf, it safe for its intended use. What many people don't know, however, is that many chemicals in our everyday products have not been tested or approved by any regulatory authority for their effects on human health.

Fact:

Almost 90 percent of the 10,500 ingredients used in personal care products have never been evaluated for safety.

Wow. Think about how many different products you might use every day: soaps, shampoos, conditioners, lotions, cleansers, toothpaste, mouthwash, baby-care products, shaving cream, anti-aging formulas, anti-youth formulas (this one works!), as well as hair fluffers, stiffeners, and straighteners, oh my!

And then there is the plethora of make-up and various other products marketed to women. My own supply probably contains many of those 10,500 ingredients. If only I could read the small print and/or could figure out what the heck some of these things are.

It is very challenging to wade through all of the information and try to make the right choice to find a product that works for you, your pocket book, and doesn't pose a risk to you or your potential offspring. Let's face it; the makers of the \$1.98 shampoo don't have your personal well-being in mind.

The number of choices on the shelves is overwhelming. Not that long ago, needs and product choices were fairly simple. But now, marketing has worked its magic to convince us that we need these things to make us "healthy and beautiful," when, actually, these products could pose more harm than good.

We are the ones feeding the \$35 billion personal-care products industry at the checkout counter every year.

Here are a few simple suggestions to guide you as you wind your way through shelves of products and try to decipher the chemical formulas on the label:

1. If it's a plant, you're probably safe.
2. If you have no idea what it is or can't pronounce it, avoid it.
3. If the print is too small or there are too many ingredients, something's not right. Okay, I'm kidding there, but it would be too long a list to say what

to avoid and what to look for, what everything means, and where it is found.

Many stores, from co-ops to natural food markets, even the major supermarkets, carry some of the "green" products you'll find in the following Web sites. See what they carry, then do some of your own sleuthing to see how green they truly are.

There are a couple of good Web sites that provide product databases, but not one that has it all. Searching is your best bet and that's a lot easier these days. My suggestion is to start with one commonly used product, such as shampoo, and go to a couple of different sites and search on it. Some give you information and others give a simple rating system.

Skin Deep

This site, found at <http://www.ewg.org/reports/skindeep2/index.php?key=nosign>, is a personal-care product safety site with in-depth information on 14,407 products: the 1004 brands of lotion, lip balm, deodorant, sunscreen and other popular items and the 6967 ingredients that form them.

With its core of 37 toxicity and regulatory databases, Skin Deep provides safety ratings and brand-by-brand comparisons that can help consumers choose safer products.

This site is a good place to start. You can search by product type or brand name. It provides a simple low/moderate/high concern ranking system for a quick assessment. If you want to go deeper, you can get an ingredient list and information on associated hazards, proprietary ingredients, data gaps, and so on.

National Institute of Health National Library of Medicine Household Products Database

This site, found at <http://householdproducts.nlm.nih.gov/>, allows you to click on "Personal Care/Use," the category type and brand name. This database links more than 6000 consumer brands to health effects from Material Safety Data Sheets (MSDS) and allows scientists and consumers to research products based on chemical ingredients.

The information comes from a variety of publicly available sources, including brand-specific labels and MSDS prepared by manufacturers. It does not include a ranking system, just provides the data.

There is also an ingredients list you can click on. A neat thing about this

Web site is you can also find out what other products the ingredient is in.

For example, in researching the ingredient Ethanol/SD Alcohol 40, which is found in some shampoo, I found that this ingredient is in a lot of auto, hobby, and home maintenance products. It's a personal choice, but do I really want that in my hair?

Greenpeace: The Chemical House

This site, found at <http://www.greenpeace.org.uk/Product/Toxics/chemicalhouse.cfm>, has information in a few different product categories but not as many as the other sites. It provides a red, yellow or green rating system for products, and a short summary of what gives it the rating.

They are mostly on the lookout for artificial musk and phthalates. It does not provide product ingredients. What is cool about this site are the graphic images of how the red listed chemicals affect human organs.

Consumer Reports: Greener Choices--Products for a Better Planet--Personal Care Products

This site, found at <http://www.eco-labels.org/greenconsumers/products.cfm?product=personal&pcat=homegarden>, gives a short list of ingredients to avoid, typical products they are in, and the concern about said ingredient.

Toxics Free Legacy Coalition: Safe Cosmetics Campaign

This campaign, found at <http://www.toxicfreelegacy.org/safecosmetics.html>, consists of a broad-based alliance of organizations across Washington State against persistent toxic chemicals in the environment and our bodies. Coming in October 2006 is a Safe Cosmetics Forum.

More than 300 cosmetics and body care products companies have promised to replace ingredients linked to cancer, birth defects, hormone disruption, and other negative health effects with safer alternatives. You can view the list of companies that have signed to compact.

Simple Things You Can Do

Look for product labels that indicate the presence of organic ingredients, or that note the product was not tested on animals. Avoid using products labeled

"antibacterial."

Choose products with the smallest numbers of listed ingredients, avoiding entirely products that contain phthalates, detergents, and antimicrobial agents.

Consider the size of an item's packaging in relation to the size of the item. Ask your favorite stores to stock organic lines of personal care products.

Ask your local schools, workplace, and other institutions to think more critically about the cleansers and other products they buy. If the labels on your favorite products aren't clear about what's in the products and how they are tested, contact the company and express your concerns

--Submitted by Sarah Barrie,
Department of Ecology

ICSEW Cell Phone Drive

Put Your Old Cell Phones to Good Use to Help Save Lives

The ICSEW conducts an ongoing "recycle your cell phone with rechargeable battery and cords drive." Donated cell phones are delivered to Verizon Hopeline, which supports non-profit organizations committed to combating domestic violence, providing emergency relief, and supporting health and education initiatives.

Verizon donates airtime and distributes phones nationally to domestic violence programs, the National Coalition Against Domestic Violence, and local government and law enforcement agencies for domestic violence victims.

Send your old phones to Jan Ward Olmstead (Health Care Authority) at mailstop 42721 or deliver them to the Health Care Authority's front desk at 676 Woodland Square Loop SE, Lacey, Washington. For more information contact Jan at 360-923-2803 or jolm107@hca.wa.gov.

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